11-8-68

To Louis Ivon
From Harold Weisberg
Jesse Core interview

Yesterday I had a long interview with Jesse Core at his home, 4429 St. Charles. I feel he told me things not in your or the FBI interviews. With his permission I taped it. When I can I will transcribe the tapes.

He added detail about Oswald's literature distribution at the Trade Mart that I think is without great significance. In part, I believe his recollection is slightly inaccurate. For example, he remembers a tanned or latin assistant about 6 feet tall, weighing about 200 pounds, wearing ~~xx~~ shorts that were but cut-off trousers, with regular shoes and socks rather than sandals. This, I believe the pictures will show, was actually Charles Steele's garb. Yet I am confident he is not erring on purpose. His recollections are clear, consistent, and associated with incidents and details that prompt recall. He was concerned about the reputation of the Trade Mart, whose public relations director he was.

He recalls Dolores Neeley (correct spelling) very well. She was his secretary. It is she who phoned him where he was to inform him of the picketing. She is intelligent, Latin-American, from Texas, probably Dallas. Her family is connected with a food business he recalls as El Phenix or Fritos, possibly a Mexican-American cafe. She and her husband Ike were a out to part when she worked for him. Ike got an undesireable discharge for striking an officer. I will seek her when I am in Dallas.

Core and his wife Cora have a clear recollection of their friend and former FBI agent Joe Presley, now retired, though in his 50s, living at Serrena 27, 4-D-Der (sic), Madrid, Spain. Presley had been the FBI or an FBI agent in the Havana embassy until expelled, when he was assigned to New Orleans. He seems to have been concerned with the diplomatic FBI work locally, not as a street agent. Jesse was a good friend of Warren deBrueys, who he hasn't seen or heard from in more than a year. deBrueys consulted him regularly about the Latin dignataries who were the guests of the ITM or the city.

The copy of the handbill used in "Plot or Politics" is one he gdt. Cora Core

is editor of Hodding Carter's Pelican Press, its publisher. They had the same experience with Louisiana News on distribution that I did, when means that, like "Oswald in New Orleans", this book was denied the mass local market. He also had recovered a balled-up handbill he had thrown at Oswald and attached it to a report he wrote for Shaw.

Chandler's recollection that Oswald had a stack of literature inside the ITM is not consistent with Core's. However, he is clear that Oswald had and he obtained samples of a number of different items, not just the handbill. He had noted comments in his copy of the Warren Report indicating inconsistencies in its accounting of this incident.

His home phone is 891-9984; office at 1820 St. Charles, 525-5202.

I am quite interested in his account of Clay Shaw's retirement and his vigorous description of Mario Bermudez, as an unscrupulous man capable of any kind of dishonesty, scheming, sinister act. He says Bermudez seems to be under the protection of Lloyd J. Cobb, president of ITM, a powerful, wealthy man who holds the job as a public service, as he has since 1962. He says Cobb is a lawyer and, among other things, a war profiteer. His firm is Cobb and Wright, Whitney National Bank Bldg. He says Cobb is of the extreme right. In his account, Cobb called Shaw in and gave him the choice between being fired and retirement, with a big party. I regard this as significant because it indicates possible knowledge on Cobb's part. If you recall, at the time of Shaw's retirement, only WHITEWASH had appeared and it did go into Clay Bertrand. Even if the actual date of resignation was prior to publication, it was not until after the manuscript had been at a large number of publishing houses and, undoubtedly, had been Xeroxed for the FBI.

Jesse clearly recall the Nashville Wharf dedication and the picture he says was published in but one edition of the States-Item, the orange-paged one. This is not the edition of record but might be found with advertising records because it might be needed for billings. He and Cora have clear recollections of Shaw in it. I suggest the photograph is in the newspaper morgue, where the librarian is a Mr. Mardenle. I will be in further touch with Core.